

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2576

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

CINCPAC

SECDEF

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S E C R E T SINGAPORE 2052

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SN

SUBJ: SINGAPORE A-4 TRAINING

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

REF: CINCPACFLT 241931Z APRIL 75

1. REFTEL DISCUSSES RAMIFICATIONS OF GOS PROPOSAL UTILIZE U.S. BASES IN PHILIPPINES FOR A-4 TRAINING AND CONCLUDES THAT GOS PROPOSAL FEASIBLE UNDER CERTAIN LIMITING CONDITIONS. REFTEL ALSO INTRODUCES NEW CONSIDERATION AS QUID-PRO-QUO OF STAGING 77 FLIGHTS FROM SINGAPORE IN EVENT OF CONTINUED DENIAL USE OF U-TAPAO BY GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND.

2. EMBASSY RECOGNIZES VALIDITY OF SEEKING AN APPROPRIATE QUID-PRO-QUO FOR OUR AGREEMENT TO ACCOMMODATE SINGAPORE'S A-4'S AT CUBI POINT. HOWEVER, IT IS OUR CONSIDERED JUDGMENT THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT P-3 DETACHMENT IN SINGAPORE AS SUGGESTED IN REFTEL WOULD BE POLITICALLY UNACCEPTABLE. WHILE SINGAPORE HAS BEEN QUIETLY HELPFUL TO USN IN PERMITTING SHIP VISITS, REPAIR AND SUPPLY ACTIVITY, GOS WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO PERMIT US TO ESTABLISH ANY SORT OF PERMANENT MILITARY PRESENCE HERE. THIS WOULD RUN COUNTER TO THEIR PROFESSED NON-SECRET

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ALIGNED STANCE WHICH IF ANYTHING WILL BE REINFORCED BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA. THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO TAKE ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT OFFEND THEIR ASEAN ASSOCIATES OR THE NEW REGIMES WHICH ARE EMERGING IN INDOCHINA. THUS, WE WOULD

STRONGLY COUNSEL AGAINST OUR ATTACHING THIS QUID-PRO-QUO TO THE A-4 TRAINING ISSUE SINCE THERE APPEARS TO BE NO CHANCE THAT IT WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY THE GOS.

3. WE MIGHT, HOWEVER, RELATE OUR DESIRE FOR CONTINUED ACCESS TO THE NAVAL BASIN AND FUEL STORAGE DEPOT TO THE A-4 MATTER, BUT WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT THE GOS HAS ANY RESERVATIONS ABOUT OUR CONTINUED USE OF THESE FACILITIES IN ANY CASE. QUITE THE CONTRARY, WE ARE REPEATEDLY ASSURED THAT THESE FACILITIES WILL BE OPEN TO UUZ. HOWEVER, THERE IS SOME DOUBT WHETHER WE WOULD HAVE ASSURED ACCESS TO THESE FACILITIES IN ALL EMERGENCY SITUATIONS (E.G. ANOTHER OIL EMBARGO) AND POSSIBLY AGREEMENT ON THAT COULD SERVE AS A QUID-PRO-QUO TO THE A-4 DEAL.

4. A POSSIBLE QUID-PRO-QUO MIGHT BE THE STAGING OF P-3 SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS THROUGH SINGAPORE FROM THE PHILIPPINES. IF THIS WOULD BE FEASIBLE TECHNICALLY, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET THE GOS TO AGREE TO PERMIT PERIODIC FLIGHTS OF P-3'S THROUGH SINGAPORE WITH SINGAPORE MERELY SERVING AS A TECHNICAL STOP. HOWEVER, WE WOULD HAVE TO EXPLAIN FULLY AND CANDIDLY TO GOS PURPOSE OF THESE FLIGHTS.

THE STATIONING OF TWO OR THREE SUPPORT PERSONNEL, AS PART OF OUR DETACHMENT 12 OR NAVY OFFICE, MIGHT BE POSSIBLE AND LASS OR ITS SUCCESSOR MIGHT HANDLE SERVICING AND MINOR REPAIRS. BUT IT WOULD HAVE TO BE A PRETTY LOW-KEY AND NOT VERY VISIBLE OPERATION OR IT WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOS. THE GOS WOULD VERY LIKELY INSIST THAT THE PURPOSE OR EVEN THE EXISTENCE OF THE P-3 FLIGHTS BE KEPT SECRET. IN TIME, HOWEVER, THE PRESS IS LIKELY TO LEARN ABOUT THE P-3 FLIGHTS AND WE WOULD HAVE TO HAVE A REASONABLY CONVINCING AND AGREED EXPLANATION TO OFFER AT THAT TIME. THE THREAT OF EXPOSURE, HOWEVER, MIGHT CAUSE THE GOS TO TURN OUR REQUEST DOWN.

5. IT SEEMS TO US THAT WHAT IS REQUIRED AS A FIRST STEP IS AN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT IS REALLY REQUIRED AND WHAT OUR OPTIONS ARE TO ESTABLISH THE NECESSARY AERIAL SURVEILLANCE OPERATION ASSUMING WE CANNOT USE U-TAPAO. IF SINGAPORE SEEMS TO BE AN INDISPENSABLE SECRET

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PART OF SUCH A SYSTEM, WE MUST EXAMINE THE MINIMUM AMOUNT OF EXPOSURE IN SINGAPORE WHICH WOULD BE NECESSARY. THEN, WE COULD CONSIDER HOW BEST TO APPROACH THE GOS, IF AT ALL. CRONK

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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